

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

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A near-field optical probe has a cantilever formed of a transparent material and having a first main surface and a second main surface opposite the first main surface. A base supports the cantilever at the first main surface. A tip extends from the second main surface of the cantilever and has a microscopic aperture at an end thereof. The tip is formed of a transparent material having a higher refractive index than that of the transparent material of the cantilever to increase an amount of near-field light generated or detected by the microscopic aperture. A shade film is formed on the second main surface of the cantilever and on a surface of the tip except for the microscopic aperture.